



## MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

*Maryland's Social Services Agency*



### MEDIA RELEASE

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**For more information:**

Elyn Garrett Jones

410-767-7758

[ejones@dhr.state.md.us](mailto:ejones@dhr.state.md.us)

### **LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES HONORED FOR PROGRESS IN CHILD WELFARE**

#### ***BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES NAMED LOCAL DEPARTMENT OF THE YEAR***

**BALTIMORE** – Maryland Department of Human Resources **Secretary Brenda Donald** presented awards to local departments of social services that met or exceeded several child welfare goals at a luncheon today hosted by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. **Based on data indicators, Donald named the Baltimore City Department of Social Services the local department of the year.**

Data analysts looked at five performance standards in child welfare to determine the winning jurisdictions. Donald presented awards to local jurisdictions for: reducing the number of children in foster care; increasing the number of children reunified within 12 months; meeting fiscal year 2009 adoption goals; reducing the number of children in group homes; and increasing the number of children in family settings.

Local departments were grouped in categories of small, medium and large jurisdictions based on their respective number of foster children. Allegany, Baltimore; Carroll; Charles; Queen Anne's; Washington; Wicomico; and Worcester counties claimed at least one top prize in the categories.

Because Baltimore City Department of Social Services won awards in three out of the five categories, Donald presented a special award to its director, Molly McGrath. Baltimore City has 60 percent of the state's child welfare cases. McGrath credited her committed staff for working hard on behalf of the children they serve.

"Two and a half years ago, we launched *Place Matters* to reform child welfare in Maryland by focusing on finding permanent families for foster children," said Donald. "Today, we can take collective pride in the impressive progress we've made thus far."

Directors and other staff from the winning jurisdictions will be recognized by Governor Martin O'Malley during a reception to be held at the State House on September 17, 2009 at 11 a.m.

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***Award: Reducing the number of children in foster care***

Presented to jurisdictions that exceeded the state's goal of reducing the number of children in foster care by 10 percent from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009 by the largest percentage.

***Large-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Baltimore County Department of Social Services reduced its number of children in foster care by **13 percent**.

***Medium-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Wicomico County Department of Social Services reduced its number of children in foster care by **29 percent**.

***Small-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Carroll County Department of Social Services reduced its number of children in foster care by **25 percent**.

***Award: Increasing the number of children reunified within 12 months***

Presented to jurisdictions that exceeded the state's goal to increase the number of children reunified with their families in less than 12 months by the largest percentage.

***Large-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Baltimore City Department of Social Services increased family reunifications by **22 percent**.

***Medium-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Charles County Department of Social Services increased family reunifications by **75 percent**.

***Small-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Queen Anne's County Department of Social Services increased family reunifications by **67 percent**.

***Award: Meeting fiscal year 2009 adoption goals***

Presented to jurisdictions that exceeded their adoption goal for fiscal year 2009 by the highest amount.

***Large-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Baltimore County Department of Social Services helped **73 children** find permanent families through adoption.

***Medium-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Washington County Department of Social Services helped **34 children** find permanent families through adoption.

***Small-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Carroll County Department of Social Services helped **six children** find permanent families through adoption.

***Award: Reducing the number of children in group homes***

Presented to jurisdictions that realized the highest percentage reduction in the number of children they place in group homes from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009.

***Large-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Baltimore City Department of Social Services reduced the number placed in group homes by **32 percent**.

***Medium-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Washington County Department of Social Services reduced the number children placed in group homes by **33 percent**.

***Small-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Worcester County Department of Social Services reduced the number of children placed in group homes by **63 percent**.

***Award: Increasing the number of children in family settings***

Presented to jurisdictions that exceeded the statewide average of placing 73 percent of children in family settings by the largest percentage.

***Large-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Baltimore City Department of Social Services placed **79 percent** of its children in family settings.

***Medium-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Allegany County Department of Social Services placed **86 percent** of its children in family settings.

***Small-sized Jurisdiction Winner:***

Worcester County Department of Social Services placed **85 percent** of its children in family settings.

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The Maryland Department of Human Resources is the state's social service provider. The agency collaborates with 24 local jurisdictions to: provide foster care, adoption and protective services to children; collect and distribute child support payments; and provide temporary cash, food stamps and medical assistance to families. It also administers programs for homeless persons, refugees, migrant workers, victims of crime and women who are displaced, battered or assaulted. Last year, DHR served 638,000 people in need. In terms of its annual budget, DHR is Maryland's fourth largest state agency.